



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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Washington, D.C. 20554

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CONSUMER & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS BUREAU REMINDS STATES THAT CURRENT TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE (TRS) CERTIFICATION WILL EXPIRE ON JULY 26, 2008, AND PROVIDES A TIMELINE FOR SEEKING RECERTIFICATION

CG Docket No. 03-123

The current TRS certifications for all states and territories will expire on July 26, 2008. Under the TRS regulations, states can apply for “renewal” one year prior to expiration, *i.e.*, July 26, 2007. 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(c).

BACKGROUND

TRS enables persons with hearing and speech disabilities to access the telephone system to communicate with voice telephone users. Congress created the TRS program in Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), codified at Section 225 of the Communications Act of 1934. 47 U.S.C. § 225. Under the statute, TRS services are intended to be functionally equivalent to voice telephone service. The TRS regulations set forth mandatory minimum standards that TRS providers must follow in offering service, and are intended to ensure that TRS meets the functional equivalency mandate. *See* 47 C.F.R. §64.604 (set forth in the attached Appendix).

Because the states have primary responsibility for the oversight and compensation of intrastate TRS, the regulations also set forth the process by which state TRS programs may be certified. 47 C.F.R. § 64.605; *see also* 47 U.S.C. §§ 225(c) & (d)(3)(B). The state certification process is intended to ensure that TRS is provided in a uniform manner throughout the United States and territories. The relevant sections of § 64.605 are set forth in the Appendix.

APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION:

Applications for certification (or renewal of certification) may be filed with the Commission beginning July 26, 2007. All certified state TRS programs are required to provide traditional (TTY-based) TRS, interstate Spanish language traditional TRS, and Speech-to-Speech (STS) service. If a state program also offers Internet Protocol (IP) Relay, Video Relay Service (VRS), Captioned Telephone Service, or IP Captioned Telephone Service, the state must also demonstrate that it provides these services consistent with the rules.

Although there is no deadline for filing, renewal applications should be filed by October 1, 2007, to give the Commission time to review and rule on the applications prior to the expiration of the prior certification.

Applications for certification are reviewed to determine whether the state TRS program has sufficiently documented that it meets all of the applicable mandatory minimum standards set forth in Section 64.604. If the program exceeds the mandatory minimum standards, the state must certify that the program does not conflict with federal law.

PROCEDURES FOR FILING: All filings must reference CG Docket No. 03-123.

Electronic Filers: Filings may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>. Follow the instructions provided on the website for submitting electronic filings.

- For ECFS filers, if multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, filers must transmit one electronic copy of the filing for each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, filers should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic filing by Internet email. To get filing instructions, filers should send an email to ecfs@fcc.gov, and include the following words in the subject line or body of the message: get form <your email address>. A sample form and directions will be sent in response.

Paper Filers: Parties who choose to submit by paper must submit an original and four copies of each filing on or before October 1, 2007. To expedite the processing of complaint log summaries, states and interstate TRS providers are encouraged to submit an additional copy to Attn: Diane Mason, Federal Communications Commission, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, 445 12th Street, SW, Room 3-A503, Washington, D.C. 20554 or by email at Diane.Mason@fcc.gov. Parties should also submit electronic disk copies of their certification filing on a standard 3.5 inch diskette or CD-Rom formatted in an IBM compatible format using Word 2003 or compatible software. The electronic media should be submitted in “read-only” mode and must be clearly labeled with the state’s name, the filing date and captioned “TRS Certification Application.”

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by electronic media, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). The Commission's contractor will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings or electronic media for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Suite 110, Washington, D.C. 20002. The filing hours at this location are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes must be disposed of before entering the building. Commercial and electronic media sent by overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743. U.S. Postal Service first-class mail, Express Mail, and Priority Mail should be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20554. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Marlene H. Dortch, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW, Room TW-B204, Washington, D.C. 20554.

SUMMARY OF STATE TRS PROGRAM CERTIFICATION TIMELINE:

DATE	ITEM	FCC ACTION
October, 2007	Public Notices are issued indicating that applications have been received by the Commission and seeking comment	Public Notices are released seeking comment on the filing. Comments due within 30 days and then an additional 15 days for

		reply comments.
September 2007 – May 2008	Applications for TRS recertification are reviewed for compliance with 47 C.F.R. §§ 64.604 & 64.605.	Deficiency letters are sent to request additional information that demonstrates compliance with the mandatory minimum requirements.
May - July, 2008	Public Notices informing states that their applications for recertification have been reviewed and certification has been renewed.	Public Notice

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A copy of this *Public Notice* and related documents are available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Suite CY-A257, Washington, D.C. 20554, (202) 418-0270. These documents also may be purchased from the Commission’s duplicating contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc. (BCPI), Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, D.C. 20554. Customers may contact BCPI at their web site: www.bcpweb.com or by calling 1-800-378-3160. Filings also may be found by searching on the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs> (insert CG Docket No. 03-123 into the Proceeding block).

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice), (202) 418-0432 (TTY). This *Public Notice* also can be downloaded in Word or Portable Document Format (PDF) at: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro>.

For further information regarding this *Public Notice*, please contact Diane Mason, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Disability Rights Office, at (202) 418-7126 (voice), (202) 418-7828 (TTY), or e-mail at Diane.Mason@fcc.gov.

APPENDIX

RELEVANT RULES:

§64.604 MANDATORY MINIMUM STANDARDS¹

The standards in this section are applicable December 18, 2000, except as stated in paragraphs (c)(2) and (c)(7) of this section.

(a) *Operational standards*—(1) *Communications assistant (CA)*. (i) TRS providers are responsible for requiring that all CAs be sufficiently trained to effectively meet the specialized communications needs of individuals with hearing and speech disabilities.

(ii) CAs must have competent skills in typing, grammar, spelling, interpretation of typewritten ASL, and familiarity with hearing and speech disability cultures, languages and etiquette. CAs must possess clear and articulate voice communications.

(iii) CAs must provide a typing speed of a minimum of 60 words per minute. Technological aids may be used to reach the required typing speed. Providers must give oral-to-type tests of CA speed.

(iv) TRS providers are responsible for requiring that VRS CAs are qualified interpreters. A “qualified interpreter” is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

(v) CAs answering and placing a TTY-based TRS or VRS call must stay with the call for a minimum of ten minutes. CAs answering and placing an STS call must stay with the call for a minimum of fifteen minutes.

(vi) TRS providers must make best efforts to accommodate a TRS user's requested CA gender when a call is initiated and, if a transfer occurs, at the time the call is transferred to another CA.

(vii) TRS shall transmit conversations between TTY and voice callers in real time.

(2) *Confidentiality and conversation content*. (i) Except as authorized by section 705 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. 605, CAs are prohibited from disclosing the content of any relayed conversation regardless of content, and with a limited exception for STS CAs, from keeping records of the content of any conversation beyond the duration of a call, even if to do so would be inconsistent with state or local law. STS CAs may retain information from a particular call in order to facilitate the completion of consecutive calls, at the request of the user. The caller may request the STS CA to retain such information, or the CA may ask the caller if he wants the CA to repeat the same information during subsequent calls. The CA may retain the information only for as long as it takes to complete the subsequent calls.

(ii) CAs are prohibited from intentionally altering a relayed conversation and, to the extent that it is not inconsistent with federal, state or local law regarding use of telephone company facilities for illegal purposes, must relay all conversation verbatim unless the relay user specifically requests summarization, or if the user requests interpretation of an ASL call. An STS CA may facilitate the call of an STS user with a speech disability so long as the CA does not interfere with the independence of the user, the user maintains control of the conversation, and the user does not object. Appropriate measures must be taken by relay providers to ensure that confidentiality of VRS users is maintained.

(3) *Types of calls*. (i) Consistent with the obligations of telecommunications carrier operators, CAs are prohibited from refusing single or sequential calls or limiting the length of calls utilizing relay services.

¹ Note that some of these requirements have been waived for certain forms of TRS.

(ii) Relay services shall be capable of handling any type of call normally provided by telecommunications carriers unless the Commission determines that it is not technologically feasible to do so. Relay service providers have the burden of proving the infeasibility of handling any type of call.

(iii) Relay service providers are permitted to decline to complete a call because credit authorization is denied.

(iv) Relay services shall be capable of handling pay-per-call calls.

(v) TRS providers are required to provide the following types of TRS calls: (1) Text-to-voice and voice-to-text; (2) VCO, two-line VCO, VCO-to-TTY, and VCO-to-VCO; (3) HCO, two-line HCO, HCO-to-TTY, HCO-to-HCO.

(vi) TRS providers are required to provide the following features: (1) Call release functionality; (2) speed dialing functionality; and (3) three-way calling functionality.

(vii) Voice mail and interactive menus. CAs must alert the TRS user to the presence of a recorded message and interactive menu through a hot key on the CA's terminal. The hot key will send text from the CA to the consumer's TTY indicating that a recording or interactive menu has been encountered. Relay providers shall electronically capture recorded messages and retain them for the length of the call. Relay providers may not impose any charges for additional calls, which must be made by the relay user in order to complete calls involving recorded or interactive messages.

(viii) TRS providers shall provide, as TRS features, answering machine and voice mail retrieval.

(4) *Handling of emergency calls.* Providers must use a system for incoming emergency calls that, at a minimum, automatically and immediately transfers the caller to an appropriate Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). An appropriate PSAP is either a PSAP that the caller would have reached if he had dialed 911 directly, or a PSAP that is capable of enabling the dispatch of emergency services to the caller in an expeditious manner.

(5) *STS called numbers.* Relay providers must offer STS users the option to maintain at the relay center a list of names and telephone numbers which the STS user calls. When the STS user requests one of these names, the CA must repeat the name and state the telephone number to the STS user. This information must be transferred to any new STS provider.

(b) *Technical standards*—(1) *ASCII and Baudot.* TRS shall be capable of communicating with ASCII and Baudot format, at any speed generally in use.

(2) *Speed of answer.* (i) TRS providers shall ensure adequate TRS facility staffing to provide callers with efficient access under projected calling volumes, so that the probability of a busy response due to CA unavailability shall be functionally equivalent to what a voice caller would experience in attempting to reach a party through the voice telephone network.

(ii) TRS facilities shall, except during network failure, answer 85% of all calls within 10 seconds by any method which results in the caller's call immediately being placed, not put in a queue or on hold. The ten seconds begins at the time the call is delivered to the TRS facility's network. A TRS facility shall ensure that adequate network facilities shall be used in conjunction with TRS so that under projected calling volume the probability of a busy response due to loop trunk congestion shall be functionally equivalent to what a voice caller would experience in attempting to reach a party through the voice telephone network.

(A) The call is considered delivered when the TRS facility's equipment accepts the call from the local exchange carrier (LEC) and the public switched network actually delivers the call to the TRS facility.

(B) Abandoned calls shall be included in the speed-of-answer calculation.

(C) A TRS provider's compliance with this rule shall be measured on a daily basis.

(D) The system shall be designed to a P.01 standard.

(E) A LEC shall provide the call attempt rates and the rates of calls blocked between the LEC and the TRS facility to relay administrators and TRS providers upon request.

(iii) Speed of answer requirements for VRS providers are phased-in as follows: by January 1, 2006, VRS providers must answer 80% of all calls within 180 seconds, measured on a monthly basis; by July 1, 2006, VRS providers must answer 80% of all calls within 150 seconds, measured on a monthly basis; and by January 1, 2007, VRS providers must answer 80% of all calls within 120 seconds, measured on a monthly basis. Abandoned calls shall be included in the VRS speed of answer calculation.

(3) *Equal access to interexchange carriers.* TRS users shall have access to their chosen interexchange carrier through the TRS, and to all other operator services, to the same extent that such access is provided to voice users.

(4) *TRS facilities.* (i) TRS shall operate every day, 24 hours a day. Relay services that are not mandated by this Commission need not be provided every day, 24 hours a day, except VRS.

(ii) TRS shall have redundancy features functionally equivalent to the equipment in normal central offices, including uninterruptible power for emergency use.

(5) *Technology.* No regulation set forth in this subpart is intended to discourage or impair the development of improved technology that fosters the availability of telecommunications to person with disabilities. TRS facilities are permitted to use SS7 technology or any other type of similar technology to enhance the functional equivalency and quality of TRS. TRS facilities that utilize SS7 technology shall be subject to the Calling Party Telephone Number rules set forth at 47 CFR 64.1600 *et seq.*

(6) *Caller ID.* When a TRS facility is able to transmit any calling party identifying information to the public network, the TRS facility must pass through, to the called party, at least one of the following: the number of the TRS facility, 711, or the 10-digit number of the calling party.

(c) *Functional standards—(1) Consumer complaint logs.* (i) States and interstate providers must maintain a log of consumer complaints including all complaints about TRS in the state, whether filed with the TRS provider or the State, and must retain the log until the next application for certification is granted. The log shall include, at a minimum, the date the complaint was filed, the nature of the complaint, the date of resolution, and an explanation of the resolution.

(ii) Beginning July 1, 2002, states and TRS providers shall submit summaries of logs indicating the number of complaints received for the 12-month period ending May 31 to the Commission by July 1 of each year. Summaries of logs submitted to the Commission on July 1, 2001 shall indicate the number of complaints received from the date of OMB approval through May 31, 2001.

(2) *Contact persons.* Beginning on June 30, 2000, State TRS Programs, interstate TRS providers, and TRS providers that have state contracts must submit to the Commission a contact person and/or office for TRS consumer information and complaints about a certified State TRS Program's provision of intrastate TRS, or, as appropriate, about the TRS provider's service. This submission must include, at a minimum, the following:

(i) The name and address of the office that receives complaints, grievances, inquiries, and suggestions;

(ii) Voice and TTY telephone numbers, fax number, e-mail address, and web address; and

(iii) The physical address to which correspondence should be sent.

(3) *Public access to information.* Carriers, through publication in their directories, periodic billing inserts, placement of TRS instructions in telephone directories, through directory assistance services, and incorporation of TTY numbers in telephone directories, shall assure that callers in their service areas are aware of the availability and use of all forms of TRS. Efforts to educate the public about TRS should extend to all segments of the public, including individuals who are hard of hearing, speech disabled, and senior citizens as well as members of the general population. In addition, each common carrier providing telephone voice transmission services shall conduct, not

later than October 1, 2001, ongoing education and outreach programs that publicize the availability of 711 access to TRS in a manner reasonably designed to reach the largest number of consumers possible.

(4) *Rates.* TRS users shall pay rates no greater than the rates paid for functionally equivalent voice communication services with respect to such factors as the duration of the call, the time of day, and the distance from the point of origination to the point of termination.

(5) *Jurisdictional separation of costs*—(i) *General.* Where appropriate, costs of providing TRS shall be separated in accordance with the jurisdictional separation procedures and standards set forth in the Commission's regulations adopted pursuant to section 410 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

(ii) *Cost recovery.* Costs caused by interstate TRS shall be recovered from all subscribers for every interstate service, utilizing a shared-funding cost recovery mechanism. Except as noted in this paragraph, with respect to VRS, costs caused by intrastate TRS shall be recovered from the intrastate jurisdiction. In a state that has a certified program under §64.605, the state agency providing TRS shall, through the state's regulatory agency, permit a common carrier to recover costs incurred in providing TRS by a method consistent with the requirements of this section. Costs caused by the provision of interstate and intrastate VRS shall be recovered from all subscribers for every interstate service, utilizing a shared-funding cost recovery mechanism.

(iii) *Telecommunications Relay Services Fund.* Effective July 26, 1993, an Interstate Cost Recovery Plan, hereinafter referred to as the TRS Fund, shall be administered by an entity selected by the Commission (administrator). The initial administrator, for an interim period, will be the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.

(A) *Contributions.* Every carrier providing interstate telecommunications services shall contribute to the TRS Fund on the basis of interstate end-user telecommunications revenues as described herein. Contributions shall be made by all carriers who provide interstate services, including, but not limited to, cellular telephone and paging, mobile radio, operator services, personal communications service (PCS), access (including subscriber line charges), alternative access and special access, packet-switched, WATS, 800, 900, message telephone service (MTS), private line, telex, telegraph, video, satellite, intraLATA, international and resale services.

(B) *Contribution computations.* Contributors' contribution to the TRS fund shall be the product of their subject revenues for the prior calendar year and a contribution factor determined annually by the Commission. The contribution factor shall be based on the ratio between expected TRS Fund expenses to interstate end-user telecommunications revenues. In the event that contributions exceed TRS payments and administrative costs, the contribution factor for the following year will be adjusted by an appropriate amount, taking into consideration projected cost and usage changes. In the event that contributions are inadequate, the fund administrator may request authority from the Commission to borrow funds commercially, with such debt secured by future years' contributions. Each subject carrier must contribute at least \$25 per year. Carriers whose annual contributions total less than \$1,200 must pay the entire contribution at the beginning of the contribution period. Service providers whose contributions total \$1,200 or more may divide their contributions into equal monthly payments. Carriers shall complete and submit, and contributions shall be based on, a "Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet" (as published by the Commission in the Federal Register). The worksheet shall be certified to by an officer of the contributor, and subject to verification by the Commission or the administrator at the discretion of the Commission. Contributors' statements in the worksheet shall be subject to the provisions of section 220 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. The fund administrator may bill contributors a separate assessment for reasonable administrative expenses and interest resulting from improper filing or overdue contributions. The Chief of the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau may waive, reduce, modify or eliminate contributor reporting requirements that prove unnecessary and require additional reporting requirements that the Bureau deems necessary to the sound and efficient administration of the TRS Fund.

(C) *Data collection from TRS Providers.* TRS providers shall provide the administrator with true and adequate data necessary to determine TRS fund revenue requirements and payments. TRS providers shall provide the administrator with the following: total TRS minutes of use, total interstate TRS minutes of use, total TRS operating expenses and total TRS investment in general accordance with part 32 of the Communications Act, and other historical or projected information reasonably requested by the administrator for purposes of computing payments

and revenue requirements. The administrator and the Commission shall have the authority to examine, verify and audit data received from TRS providers as necessary to assure the accuracy and integrity of fund payments.

(D) [Reserved]

(E) *Payments to TRS providers.* TRS Fund payments shall be distributed to TRS providers based on formulas approved or modified by the Commission. The administrator shall file schedules of payment formulas with the Commission. Such formulas shall be designed to compensate TRS providers for reasonable costs of providing interstate TRS, and shall be subject to Commission approval. Such formulas shall be based on total monthly interstate TRS minutes of use. TRS minutes of use for purposes of interstate cost recovery under the TRS Fund are defined as the minutes of use for completed interstate TRS calls placed through the TRS center beginning after call set-up and concluding after the last message call unit. In addition to the data required under paragraph (c)(5)(iii)(C) of this section, all TRS providers, including providers who are not interexchange carriers, local exchange carriers, or certified state relay providers, must submit reports of interstate TRS minutes of use to the administrator in order to receive payments. The administrator shall establish procedures to verify payment claims, and may suspend or delay payments to a TRS provider if the TRS provider fails to provide adequate verification of payment upon reasonable request, or if directed by the Commission to do so. The TRS Fund administrator shall make payments only to eligible TRS providers operating pursuant to the mandatory minimum standards as required in §64.604, and after disbursements to the administrator for reasonable expenses incurred by it in connection with TRS Fund administration. TRS providers receiving payments shall file a form prescribed by the administrator. The administrator shall fashion a form that is consistent with parts 32 and 36 procedures reasonably tailored to meet the needs of TRS providers. The Commission shall have authority to audit providers and have access to all data, including carrier specific data, collected by the fund administrator. The fund administrator shall have authority to audit TRS providers reporting data to the administrator. The formulas should appropriately compensate interstate providers for the provision of VRS, whether intrastate or interstate.

(F) TRS providers eligible for receiving payments from the TRS Fund are:

(1) TRS facilities operated under contract with and/or by certified state TRS programs pursuant to §64.605; or

(2) TRS facilities owned by or operated under contract with a common carrier providing interstate services operated pursuant to §64.604; or

(3) Interstate common carriers offering TRS pursuant to §64.604; or

(4) Video Relay Service (VRS) and Internet Protocol (IP) Relay providers certified by the Commission pursuant to §64.605.

(G) Any eligible TRS provider as defined in paragraph (c)(5)(iii)(F) of this section shall notify the administrator of its intent to participate in the TRS Fund thirty (30) days prior to submitting reports of TRS interstate minutes of use in order to receive payment settlements for interstate TRS, and failure to file may exclude the TRS provider from eligibility for the year.

(H) *Administrator reporting, monitoring, and filing requirements.* The administrator shall perform all filing and reporting functions required in paragraphs (c)(5)(iii)(A) through (c)(5)(iii)(J) of this section. TRS payment formulas and revenue requirements shall be filed with the Commission on May 1 of each year, to be effective the following July 1. The administrator shall report annually to the Commission an itemization of monthly administrative costs which shall consist of all expenses, receipts, and payments associated with the administration of the TRS Fund. The administrator is required to keep the TRS Fund separate from all other funds administered by the administrator, shall file a cost allocation manual (CAM) and shall provide the Commission full access to all data collected pursuant to the administration of the TRS Fund. The administrator shall account for the financial transactions of the TRS Fund in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for federal agencies and maintain the accounts of the TRS Fund in accordance with the United States Government Standard General Ledger. When the administrator, or any independent auditor hired by the administrator, conducts audits of providers of services under the TRS program or contributors to the TRS Fund, such audits shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. In administering the TRS Fund, the administrator shall also comply with all relevant and

applicable federal financial management and reporting statutes. The administrator shall establish a non-paid voluntary advisory committee of persons from the hearing and speech disability community, TRS users (voice and text telephone), interstate service providers, state representatives, and TRS providers, which will meet at reasonable intervals (at least semi-annually) in order to monitor TRS cost recovery matters. Each group shall select its own representative to the committee. The administrator's annual report shall include a discussion of the advisory committee deliberations.

(I) *Information filed with the administrator.* The administrator shall keep all data obtained from contributors and TRS providers confidential and shall not disclose such data in company-specific form unless directed to do so by the Commission. Subject to any restrictions imposed by the Chief of the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, the TRS Fund administrator may share data obtained from carriers with the administrators of the universal support mechanisms (*See 47 CFR 54.701 of this chapter*), the North American Numbering Plan administration cost recovery (*See 47 CFR 52.16 of this chapter*), and the long-term local number portability cost recovery (*See 47 CFR 52.32 of this chapter*). The TRS Fund administrator shall keep confidential all data obtained from other administrators. The administrator shall not use such data except for purposes of administering the TRS Fund, calculating the regulatory fees of interstate common carriers, and aggregating such fee payments for submission to the Commission. The Commission shall have access to all data reported to the administrator, and authority to audit TRS providers. Contributors may make requests for Commission nondisclosure of company-specific revenue information under §0.459 of this chapter by so indicating on the Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet at the time that the subject data are submitted. The Commission shall make all decisions regarding nondisclosure of company-specific information.

(J) The administrator's performance and this plan shall be reviewed by the Commission after two years.

(K) All parties providing services or contributions or receiving payments under this section are subject to the enforcement provisions specified in the Communications Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Commission's rules.

(6) *Complaints*—(i) *Referral of complaint.* If a complaint to the Commission alleges a violation of this subpart with respect to intrastate TRS within a state and certification of the program of such state under §64.605 is in effect, the Commission shall refer such complaint to such state expeditiously.

(ii) Intrastate complaints shall be resolved by the state within 180 days after the complaint is first filed with a state entity, regardless of whether it is filed with the state relay administrator, a state PUC, the relay provider, or with any other state entity.

(iii) *Jurisdiction of Commission.* After referring a complaint to a state entity under paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section, or if a complaint is filed directly with a state entity, the Commission shall exercise jurisdiction over such complaint only if:

(A) Final action under such state program has not been taken within:

(1) 180 days after the complaint is filed with such state entity; or

(2) A shorter period as prescribed by the regulations of such state; or

(B) The Commission determines that such state program is no longer qualified for certification under §64.605.

(iv) The Commission shall resolve within 180 days after the complaint is filed with the Commission any interstate TRS complaint alleging a violation of section 225 of the Act or any complaint involving intrastate relay services in states without a certified program. The Commission shall resolve intrastate complaints over which it exercises jurisdiction under paragraph (c)(6)(iii) of this section within 180 days.

(v) *Complaint procedures.* Complaints against TRS providers for alleged violations of this subpart may be either informal or formal.

(A) *Informal complaints—(1) Form.* An informal complaint may be transmitted to the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau by any reasonable means, such as letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet e-mail, or some other method that would best accommodate a complainant's hearing or speech disability.

(2) *Content.* An informal complaint shall include the name and address of the complainant; the name and address of the TRS provider against whom the complaint is made; a statement of facts supporting the complainant's allegation that the TRS provided it has violated or is violating section 225 of the Act and/or requirements under the Commission's rules; the specific relief or satisfaction sought by the complainant; and the complainant's preferred format or method of response to the complaint by the Commission and the defendant TRS provider (such as letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet e-mail, or some other method that would best accommodate the complainant's hearing or speech disability).

(3) *Service; designation of agents.* The Commission shall promptly forward any complaint meeting the requirements of this subsection to the TRS provider named in the complaint. Such TRS provider shall be called upon to satisfy or answer the complaint within the time specified by the Commission. Every TRS provider shall file with the Commission a statement designating an agent or agents whose principal responsibility will be to receive all complaints, inquiries, orders, decisions, and notices and other pronouncements forwarded by the Commission. Such designation shall include a name or department designation, business address, telephone number (voice and TTY), facsimile number and, if available, internet e-mail address.

(B) *Review and disposition of informal complaints. (1)* Where it appears from the TRS provider's answer, or from other communications with the parties, that an informal complaint has been satisfied, the Commission may, in its discretion, consider the matter closed without response to the complainant or defendant. In all other cases, the Commission shall inform the parties of its review and disposition of a complaint filed under this subpart. Where practicable, this information shall be transmitted to the complainant and defendant in the manner requested by the complainant (e.g., letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY) or Internet e-mail).

(2) A complainant unsatisfied with the defendant's response to the informal complaint and the staff's decision to terminate action on the informal complaint may file a formal complaint with the Commission pursuant to paragraph (c)(6)(v)(C) of this section.

(C) *Formal complaints.* A formal complaint shall be in writing, addressed to the Federal Communications Commission, Enforcement Bureau, Telecommunications Consumer Division, Washington, DC 20554 and shall contain:

(1) The name and address of the complainant,

(2) The name and address of the defendant against whom the complaint is made,

(3) A complete statement of the facts, including supporting data, where available, showing that such defendant did or omitted to do anything in contravention of this subpart, and

(4) The relief sought.

(D) *Amended complaints.* An amended complaint setting forth transactions, occurrences or events which have happened since the filing of the original complaint and which relate to the original cause of action may be filed with the Commission.

(E) *Number of copies.* An original and two copies of all pleadings shall be filed.

(F) *Service. (1)* Except where a complaint is referred to a state pursuant to §64.604(c)(6)(i), or where a complaint is filed directly with a state entity, the Commission will serve on the named party a copy of any complaint or amended complaint filed with it, together with a notice of the filing of the complaint. Such notice shall call upon the defendant to satisfy or answer the complaint in writing within the time specified in said notice of complaint.

(2) All subsequent pleadings and briefs shall be served by the filing party on all other parties to the proceeding in accordance with the requirements of §1.47 of this chapter. Proof of such service shall also be made in accordance with the requirements of said section.

(G) *Answers to complaints and amended complaints.* Any party upon whom a copy of a complaint or amended complaint is served under this subpart shall serve an answer within the time specified by the Commission in its notice of complaint. The answer shall advise the parties and the Commission fully and completely of the nature of the defense and shall respond specifically to all material allegations of the complaint. In cases involving allegations of harm, the answer shall indicate what action has been taken or is proposed to be taken to stop the occurrence of such harm. Collateral or immaterial issues shall be avoided in answers and every effort should be made to narrow the issues. Matters alleged as affirmative defenses shall be separately stated and numbered. Any defendant failing to file and serve an answer within the time and in the manner prescribed may be deemed in default.

(H) *Replies to answers or amended answers.* Within 10 days after service of an answer or an amended answer, a complainant may file and serve a reply which shall be responsive to matters contained in such answer or amended answer and shall not contain new matter. Failure to reply will not be deemed an admission of any allegation contained in such answer or amended answer.

(I) *Defective pleadings.* Any pleading filed in a complaint proceeding that is not in substantial conformity with the requirements of the applicable rules in this subpart may be dismissed.

(7) *Treatment of TRS customer information.* Beginning on July 21, 2000, all future contracts between the TRS administrator and the TRS vendor shall provide for the transfer of TRS customer profile data from the outgoing TRS vendor to the incoming TRS vendor. Such data must be disclosed in usable form at least 60 days prior to the provider's last day of service provision. Such data may not be used for any purpose other than to connect the TRS user with the called parties desired by that TRS user. Such information shall not be sold, distributed, shared or revealed in any other way by the relay center or its employees, unless compelled to do so by lawful order.

[65 FR 38436, June 21, 2000, as amended at 65 FR 54804, Sept. 11, 2000; 67 FR 13229, Mar. 21, 2002; 68 FR 50977, Aug. 25, 2003; 69 FR 5719, Feb. 6, 2004; 69 FR 53351, Sept. 1, 2004; 69 FR 55985, Sept. 17, 2004; 69 FR 57231, Sept. 24, 2004; 70 FR 51658, Aug. 31, 2005; 70 FR 76215, Dec. 23, 2005]

§64.605 STATE CERTIFICATION.

(a) *State documentation—(1) Certified state program.* Any state, through its office of the governor or other delegated executive office empowered to provide TRS, desiring to establish a state program under this section shall submit, not later than October 1, 1992, documentation to the Commission addressed to the Federal Communications Commission, Chief, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, TRS Certification Program, Washington, DC 20554, and captioned “TRS State Certification Application.” All documentation shall be submitted in narrative form, shall clearly describe the state program for implementing intrastate TRS, and the procedures and remedies for enforcing any requirements imposed by the state program. The Commission shall give public notice of states filing for certification including notification in the Federal Register.

(2) *VRS and IP Relay provider.* Any entity desiring to provide VRS or IP Relay services, independent from any certified state TRS program or any TRS provider otherwise eligible for compensation from the Interstate TRS Fund, and to receive compensation from the Interstate TRS Fund, shall submit documentation to the Commission addressed to the Federal Communications Commission, Chief, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, TRS Certification Program, Washington, DC 20554, and captioned “VRS and IP Relay Certification Application.” The documentation shall include, in narrative form:

(i) A description of the forms of TRS to be provided (*i.e.*, VRS and/or IP Relay);

(ii) A description of how the provider will meet all non-waived mandatory minimum standards applicable to each form of TRS offered;

(iii) A description of the provider's procedures for ensuring compliance with all applicable TRS rules;

(iv) A description of the provider's complaint procedures;

(v) A narrative describing any areas in which the provider's service will differ from the applicable mandatory minimum standards;

(vi) A narrative establishing that services that differ from the mandatory minimum standards do not violate applicable mandatory minimum standards;

(vii) Demonstration of status as a common carrier; and

(viii) A statement that the provider will file annual compliance reports demonstrating continued compliance with these rules.

(b) (1) *Requirements for state certification.* After review of state documentation, the Commission shall certify, by letter, or order, the state program if the Commission determines that the state certification documentation:

(i) Establishes that the state program meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in §64.604;

(ii) Establishes that the state program makes available adequate procedures and remedies for enforcing the requirements of the state program, including that it makes available to TRS users informational materials on state and Commission complaint procedures sufficient for users to know the proper procedures for filing complaints; and

(iii) Where a state program exceeds the mandatory minimum standards contained in §64.604, the state establishes that its program in no way conflicts with federal law.

(2) *Requirements for VRS and IP Relay Provider FCC Certification.* After review of certification documentation, the Commission shall certify, by Public Notice, that the VRS or IP Relay provider is eligible for compensation from the Interstate TRS Fund if the Commission determines that the certification documentation:

(i) Establishes that the provision of VRS and/or IP Relay will meet or exceed all non-waived operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in §64.604;

(ii) Establishes that the VRS and/or IP Relay provider makes available adequate procedures and remedies for ensuring compliance with the requirements of this section and the mandatory minimum standards contained in §64.604, including that it makes available for TRS users informational materials on complaint procedures sufficient for users to know the proper procedures for filing complaints; and

(iii) Where the TRS service differs from the mandatory minimum standards contained in §64.604, the VRS and/or IP Relay provider establishes that its service does not violate applicable mandatory minimum standards.

(c)(1) *State certification period.* State certification shall remain in effect for five years. One year prior to expiration of certification, a state may apply for renewal of its certification by filing documentation as prescribed by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.

(2) *VRS and IP Relay Provider FCC certification period.* Certification granted under this section shall remain in effect for five years. A VRS or IP Relay provider may apply for renewal of its certification by filing documentation with the Commission, at least 90 days prior to expiration of certification, containing the information described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(d) *Method of funding.* Except as provided in §64.604, the Commission shall not refuse to certify a state program based solely on the method such state will implement for funding intrastate TRS, but funding mechanisms, if labeled, shall be labeled in a manner that promote national understanding of TRS and do not offend the public.

(e)(1) *Suspension or revocation of state certification.* The Commission may suspend or revoke such certification if, after notice and opportunity for hearing, the Commission determines that such certification is no longer warranted. In a state whose program has been suspended or revoked, the Commission shall take such steps as may be necessary, consistent with this subpart, to ensure continuity of TRS. The Commission may, on its own motion, require a certified state program to submit documentation demonstrating ongoing compliance with the Commission's minimum standards if, for example, the Commission receives evidence that a state program may not be in compliance with the minimum standards.

(2) *Suspension or revocation of VRS and IP Relay Provider FCC certification.* The Commission may suspend or revoke the certification of a VRS or IP Relay provider if, after notice and opportunity for hearing, the Commission determines that such certification is no longer warranted. The Commission may, on its own motion, require a certified VRS or IP Relay provider to submit documentation demonstrating ongoing compliance with the Commission's minimum standards if, for example, the Commission receives evidence that a certified VRS or IP Relay provider may not be in compliance with the minimum standards.

(f) *Notification of substantive change.* (1) States must notify the Commission of substantive changes in their TRS programs within 60 days of when they occur, and must certify that the state TRS program continues to meet federal minimum standards after implementing the substantive change.

(2) VRS and IP Relay providers certified under this section must notify the Commission of substantive changes in their TRS programs, services, and features within 60 days of when such changes occur, and must certify that the interstate TRS provider continues to meet federal minimum standards after implementing the substantive change.

(g) VRS and IP Relay providers certified under this section shall file with the Commission, on an annual basis, a report providing evidence that they are in compliance with §64.604.

[70 FR 76215, Dec. 23, 2005]